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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a career placement project which provided special services to students with learning disabilities (LD) at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) in New York City. Forty-five students and 16 employers participated in the project, including full-time and continuing education students pursuing a variety of degrees. Inservice training was provided to 125 placement counselors and interested faculty, addressing LD student profiles, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and ongoing tutorial and career services for students with LD at FIT. Career workshops, individualized job counseling, and employer referrals were conducted for students, as well as individualized counseling to help students determine their career direction, choice of college major, and course selection. A computerized career guidance program was employed to give students a starting point for in-depth self-assessment. A counselor with LD was assigned to the project team along with the Learning Disabled Coordinator and the Career Placement Office staff. Outreach to industry representatives enlisted employers to actively support the program with full and part time employment and internships. Employer awareness of laws pertaining to employees with LD increased as a result of the program, and employers now participate in career workshops for students with LD. Several appendices provide promotional, descriptive, and evaluative information about the project. (PB)

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ED 381 973

CAREER PLACEMENT FOR LEARNING DISABLED STUDENTS

FINAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

AWARD #H078C10031-91
PROGRAM #CFDA 84.078C

DATES OF OPERATION: AUGUST 15, 1991 - JANUARY 31, 1995

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Award #H078C10031-91
Program #CFDA 84.078C

Executive Summary
Career Placement for Learning Disabled Students
August 15, 1991 - January 31, 1995

From 1991 to 1994, the Fashion Institute of Technology (F.I.T.), which is a specialized college under the program of the State University of New York, developed a Career Placement Program that improves the ability of college faculty and employers to assist learning disabled (LD) students to enter into and retain jobs related to their career majors.

Forty-five students and 16 employers participated in the Career Placement Project. The profiles of the students varied along a continuum of mildly to severely learning disabled. Students were full-time and Continuing Education, A.A.S. and B.F.A./B.S. students.

With the assistance of a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the college's part-time Coordinator for Learning Disabled Students Services, the Director of the Career Counseling and Placement Department, and the Chairperson of the Educational Skills Department designed and implemented service elements to improve the school to work transition of LD students. The LD Coordinator was the Project Director.

Inservice training for placement counselors and interested faculty was conducted throughout the three-year period. Eight workshops, attended by 125 faculty and administrators, were offered. The workshop agendas covered LD student profiles, the Individuals with Disabilities Act, explained the ongoing tutorial and career services for LD students at F.I.T., and described the career staff's efforts to achieve appropriate job placements for LD students. As a result of these workshops and outreach activities, most F.I.T. faculty are well informed about LD students' career needs and many are actively involved in career development activities. With this institutional base established, the LD Service Coordinator is able to continue an active, but reduced, program of faculty workshops. Additionally, while one career counselor has primary responsibility for LD students, all career counselors collaborate with the LD Coordinator to assist LD students.

Career workshops, individualized job counseling, and employer referrals are ongoing for LD students:

o To provide learning disabled students with information on industry expectations and realities of the labor market, student career workshops with industry were organized. The workshops not only provide students with a real-life picture of what lies ahead in the work world and the interview process but initiates discussions with employers about disclosure and job modifications. Students benefit from these workshops, becoming more knowledgeable about the job market, networking with employers and industry mentors, knowing that a coordinated support system exists for them.

o **Individualized counseling is offered to help LD students determine their career direction, choice of college major, and course selection.** By providing accommodations such as readers, the program is able to use GURU, a computerized career guidance program, as a starting point for in-depth self-assessment counseling. Assistance in developing job readiness skills and in the job hunting process as well as job leads are also offered. Once on the job, students receive counseling for job adjustment issues, such as salary and disclosure issues. The common thread throughout counseling sessions is to help students focus on their strengths and abilities rather than on their disabilities.

o **The F.I.T. Internship Office has assigned a counselor to serve LD students.** The counselor works as part of the project team with the Learning Disabled Coordinator and the Career Placement Office staff. This counselor, significantly, is herself learning disabled. One of the unanticipated outcomes of the project has been that the college uncovered a hidden asset through the self-identification of the learning disabled who are employed at F.I.T. which occurred when they eagerly came forward to assist the LD students.

Outreach to and education of employers about the strengths of LD students was a significant undertaking of the program during the grant period. Particular emphasis was put on this outreach during the third year. Eighty industry representatives were introduced to the Career Placement Project for LD students through group or one-on-one sessions; 16 indicated their willingness to offer students guidance and employment. Of these 16, 12 employers are actively supporting the program providing full and part time employment and internships. Other employers were reached through mailings and in telephone interviews.

Although the most difficult of part of the program, the employer education program has had important results. In the first instance, the employers' awareness of LD student profiles and the laws protecting the LD in the workplace have been raised to the point where employers are requesting literature about LD students and the ADA to share with company staff. Secondly, employers are more readily participating in career workshops for LD students, providing feedback that gives the LD student a realistic view of the work world. Lastly, employers are hiring learning disabled students and giving them internship opportunities. Of the 45 students who participated in the program, to-date 26 students have had work experiences: 12 graduated and are employed full-time; ten students have worked part-time in time in the industry; and four completed internships.

From Karen, who is employed by Vogue as a computer pattern designer to Michael, who is a display merchandiser with Selby's, LD students are excited about the program. Said one participant, "It's very important to me that you continue this program; I love it!" Another student said. "There should be more of this. I enjoy it very much and it is good being around people like me."

I. Project Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of the Career Placement Project for LD students at the Fashion Institute of Technology (F.I.T.) which began in Fall 1991 were:

1. To educate F.I.T. career counselors, internship counselors, student faculty advisors, department chairs, classroom instructors, and college administrators about learning disabled students' strengths, weaknesses, learning styles and individual profiles, so that college services and career activities best suited to the academic and career needs of the learning disabled can be organized and instituted at the college level.

2. To develop workshops to educate employers of the learning disabled students' talents, needs and rights in the workplace, so that a foundation of support for employment is established.

3. To assist LD students in developing job search and job retention skills to improve their rate of employment in a competitive market.

4. To place learning disabled students in jobs (both part-time and full-time), as well as internships, compatible with their skills and talents.

II. Project Activities (1991-1992)

Inservice Training of F.I.T. Faculty and Staff

The 1991-92 project activities focused on developing inservice training for F.I.T. faculty and staff. The purpose of the workshops was to promote collaboration of key faculty and staff needed to establish solid support for the LD Career Placement Project. Three workshops, attended by 50 faculty and staff members, were held: Eight career counselors attended the first workshop; the second workshop was attended by the Dean of Liberal Arts, eight Liberal Arts chairpersons, and the Educational Skills Chairperson. Thirty-four classroom instructors and student faculty advisors attended the third faculty workshop.

Each workshop lasted 35 to 40 minutes and discussed: LD student profiles, the ramifications of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the tutoring program for LD students at F.I.T., faculty social and legal responsibilities, and the steps needed to achieve appropriate job placements for LD students. Those attending the workshops also discussed LD learning problems and the commonly shared reading, writing, and math difficulties of LD students.

An open discussion format was used to involve the workshop participants in expressing their knowledge and concerns about the learning disabled. Workshop attendees assessed the type of faculty/counselor involvement needed to support quality career program services and activities for LD students at F.I.T. Faculty also reviewed the classroom and testing accommodations required by the learning disabled to succeed in coursework. The workshops included presentations on these issues and printed materials. (See Appendix A)

Interested faculty and career counselors followed up with the project staff in developing academic/career services and accommodations for LD students. The career counselors and the LD Coordinator reviewed the structure of individualized conferences for LD students conducted by the career counselors. A consensus was reached that conferences needed to increase the LD students' participation in assessing their industry-related skills in order to encourage the LD students to take responsibility for their career decisions. One way to implement this was to make GURU available to LD students.

(GURU is a computer program which provides users with printouts of job possibilities by job titles, along with job descriptions based on users interests, skills and values. In follow-up sessions with a career counselor, students explore the nature of jobs and determine how their skills mesh with the demands of the job. This facilitates course planning and planning relevant part-time, summer or freelance jobs. GURU is customized for more than two dozen programs offered at F.I.T.)

Industry Contacts

Industry support is one of the key elements needed to achieve job placement for the learning disabled. During the three years of the program, 80 key industry representatives were educated about hiring qualified learning disabled students.

Apprising employers about the learning disabled involved a three-pronged outreach effort. Some industry representatives were invited to participate in industry workshops; others were counseled, one-on-one, when job placements or internships were negotiated for LD students. Still others were introduced to the project goals by the Career Counseling Director when they attended Alumni Association meetings or business meeting at F.I.T. In 1991, 25 employers met with the Career Counseling Director and/or other career counseling personnel.

During the initial contact, prospective employers' awareness of the characteristics of the learning disabled was raised and their support solicited. They also learned of the "hidden nature" of learning disabilities and the minor accommodations the

learning disabled may need on the job. Employers' responsibilities to the learning disabled were also discussed.

Follow up letters were sent to employers requesting their commitment to participate in activities supporting the development of LD students' job search skills and employment opportunities. Sixteen (16) employers registered to assist the project staff in improving LD students' job skills development and employment rate. During the three-year period, 12 of the 16 employers either participated in industry workshops, interviewed students, and/or offered jobs to LD students. A list of employers and F.I.T. alumni who supported the project is at Appendix B.

Obtaining the support of an initial core of active employers is crucial to provide the framework for increasing future employer involvement. The project staff found that working with this small group of committed employers helped prepare LD students for work experiences and provided job placement opportunities for them.

Student Participation

Learning disabled students at F.I.T. were told of the specialized career services by the LD Coordinator. During the first year, 12 LD students sought job-related services from the LD Department. Of the 12, five students obtained work in the fashion industries: three LD graduates and one LD Continuing Education student obtained full-time jobs; and one third-semester student worked part-time in the industry.

The 12 students participating in the first year of the program were representative of the 45 students who enrolled over the three years. All students had learning disabilities that significantly interfered with their ability to perform activities that the average person can perform with little or no difficulty: Some of the students in the program were dyslexic and plagued with reading difficulties; others suffered from severe processing difficulties, which prevented them from following verbal instructions easily or accurately. Still others struggled with writing and/or expressive language problems. A few students were diagnosed with math disabilities. Often a student's main disability appeared in combination with other learning problems. Most of the students needed help in scheduling time, learning to organize, and needed tutoring in academic coursework.

Individualized Career Counseling Sessions for LD Students

The LD Coordinator met once a month with two career counselors from the Career Counseling and Placement Office. Together this team developed information about students' learning problems, job skill needs, compensatory abilities, and the

accommodations needed at the work site. The monthly meetings were also used to plan students' individualized counseling sessions and other career development activities.

Career counselors at F.I.T. specialize in different industry areas. One career counselor, especially knowledgeable and trained to work with the learning disabled, conducted most of the individualized counseling sessions with the LD students; the Career Counseling and Job Placement Director and other career counselors were available to work, one-on-one, with specific students requiring help in the counselor's industry area.

The career counseling sessions were designed to meet the individual needs of the students depending on where they were in the career development process. Early in the first year, each of the 12 students was assessed by the LD Coordinator to determine his/her counseling needs. Throughout the project, the individualized counseling services were available to all students seeking career skill development and/or employment immediately following enrollment in the program. All students met at least twice with a career counselor; many students met as often as four or five times, depending on their career development needs. Counseling issues varied:

1. To determine career direction or focus. This need ranged from the choice of a major to the specific classes to take.

2. In-depth self-assessment to help students become aware of their skills and abilities.

3. Development of job-readiness skills: resume preparation; interviewing (conducting mock interviews) and role-playing to enhance telephone communication skills; and portfolio reviews.

4. Help in locating direct leads and, in some cases, arranging employer interviews.

5. Supporting students through the job hunting process, including evaluating interviews, follow-up procedures, and emotional support in handling rejection.

6. On-the-job adjustment issues: dealing with difficult employers, disclosure issues, salary negotiations, and requesting accommodations.

The computerized career guidance program, GURU, was used for six of the students during the first year. Some students scheduled the GURU program and one follow-up conference, while others came back several times. Some students needed help in only one aspect of the process; others needed help in many aspects.

The common thread throughout all the career counseling sessions was to help the students gain self-confidence and assurance, so they would come to believe in themselves and feel empowered. *They focused on their strengths and abilities rather than on their disabilities.* The extent to which this goal was reached is in some measure gauged by the students' progress in the development of job search skills and the employment records they achieved: During the first year, five students obtained work. They expressed a high level of satisfaction with their jobs. One student, working as a patternmaker, said, "My job allows me to do the work that I love and do best."

Student Workshops

In addition to the individualized counseling sessions, the twelve students participated in small group workshops. Through a needs assessment survey, the career counselor identified common areas of need -- help with the interview process, resume and cover letter writing, and assistance in developing portfolios. Career-specific workshops were conducted to meet these needs.

For example, six students requested help to overcome their fears about the interview process. A workshop for these students was shaped. The students viewed interview tapes and, in a follow-up, the group further discussed issues central to the interview process. After the workshop was over, one student close to graduation said, "These sessions have helped me to move forward in an area I thought I couldn't tackle."

Five students nearing graduation requested a small group session on writing resumes and cover letters. The career counselor and the LD Coordinator collaborated about the students' writing disabilities and reviewed the teaching techniques that would be most helpful to the students' improvement. In the workshop, these students reviewed business communication techniques. Another student expressed his satisfaction with the career workshops when he stated, "Now I feel ready to take on the business world. I could not have written such a good resume without help."

Overall, the students were receptive to the support they received, and were eager to continue their participation in the project.

Dissemination

A variety of means were used to disseminate information about the career activities for learning disabled students at the Fashion Institute of Technology in 1991.

A newsletter documenting F.I.T.'s career services and activities was published. Over 1500 copies were sent to public

and private high schools, colleges and universities, and to career service providers throughout the country. (See Appendix H)

In addition to the newsletter, the career staff visited the High School of Art and Design to meet with special education students and their mentors to apprise them of F.I.T.'s specialized services and career opportunities for the learning disabled. Approximately 35 students attended the presentation. Special education instructors and the principal were also present.

To keep abreast of the research findings and developments concerning the employment of the learning disabled, the career staff attended conferences held for LD service providers. At these meetings, the F.I.T. career newsletter was distributed to colleagues from other institutions. At New York University's annual conference and at a meeting of the New York City Consortium, 100+ newsletters were distributed. During a meeting sponsored by VESID (Vocational Services for Individuals with Disabilities), another 60+ newsletters were distributed.

The Orton Society, a national organization for learning disabled people, requested 150 newsletters which the New York office mailed to members seeking information about college-level LD programs and the career services offered.

III. Project Activities (1992-1993)

Inservice Training of F.I.T. Faculty and Staff

In the second year of the project, faculty workshops were held for additional college personnel. Three workshops were organized, similar to the workshops held the previous year. Approximately 62 faculty and staff participated, increasing the total for the two years to 112. Monthly meetings continued between the two career counselors and the LD Coordinator. The workshops and meetings helped to galvanize the faculty to institute career activities for the learning disabled at the college.

The emphasis in faculty workshops was tailored to issues relevant to the specific audience. In Fall 1992, the LD Director and the LD Coordinator conducted a workshop for six members of the Mathematics Department to correct misconceptions about LD students' math disabilities. Math faculty learned that LD students can better retrieve information and apply strategies needed to solve math problems when the pressure of a time limit is removed. The workshop stressed that time extensions impact on LD students' performances on the Math Placement Test and in passing class exams. The discussion about some LD students' poor functioning in math was comprehensive and underscored some of the common difficulties of discalculate students.

At a workshop for two dormitory supervisors and 40 resident assistants, the career grant personnel explained that dormitory living is an opportunity for LD students to develop the cooperative skills necessary for them to function in a work environment. The dorm assistants were advised to foster LD students' interactive social skills. Dorm supervisors were alerted to the fact that some LD students need special preference in being admitted to dorms because it is important for them to be near the support services offered by the college.

The Acting Dean of the Art and Design Division met with the project staff to discuss how a network of relationships could be achieved. The Dean arranged for the project staff to attend an Art and Design Chairpersons' meeting; thirteen faculty were present. The career objectives for the learning disabled were presented, and the students' learning problems were defined.

Since this meeting, the career staff has had a solid connection with the Art & Design Chairpeople. Department chairs say that they have a better understanding of LD students' hidden handicaps and career needs. This connection is particularly important to the LD students, since they often excell in design areas. Now, with key Art and Design faculty supporting them and recommending them for jobs, students are better able to move to work experiences related to their majors and talents.

Forms developed to inform faculty of LD students in their classes and accommodations needed are at Appendix C.

Industry Contacts

Industry contacts were maintained and increased during the second year of the career project. The career counselors employed many avenues of contact, including mailings of informational letters to encourage industry representatives to join in meeting LD students' employment needs. An additional 40 business representatives were addressed, increasing the total number of employers contacted to 65:

o The Career Counseling Director, Professor Roz Dolber, addressed employers when they attended related meetings at the college. Major companies such as J.C. Penney, Anne Klein, and J.B. Wright, Inc., were among those solicited to interview students, and to offer full- and part-time work as well as to commit to future participation in F.I.T.'s career services and activities.

o Professor Dolber also spoke at a meeting of F.I.T.'s Alumni Association and informed its members about the career services now available on campus for LD students. Thirty alumni industry employers attended; ten pledged to work closely with the career supervisors.

o The career counselor assigned to LD students increased her phone calls to prospective employers, since more students joined the program and were seeking work experiences.

o The career counselors spoke to all visiting industry representatives about F.I.T.'s specialized career services for the learning disabled.

Student Participation

In the second year of the career project, 25 additional learning disabled students sought specialized career services, raising the total served to 37. Most students had individualized conferences for career-related advice, and participated in small group workshops to learn about ADA, interviewing, requesting job accommodations, job search and job retention skills.

Resume and cover letter writing instruction workshops continued. A total of 75 appointments were made to see career counselors during the second year of the project activities. Students' attendance at the career conferences and small group workshops for both years was in the 90% range.

Eight of the 25 students took the computerized career program, GURU. Of the eight, five wanted to identify their areas of strength and explore the job possibilities in their elected majors. The other three students were uncertain about their chosen majors at the college, and they wanted to investigate other possibilities.

The students' responses to GURU were positive. One student changed her major from Fashion Design to Patternmaking Technology, which was a better choice given her talents and abilities. Another student commented that she felt more in touch with her talents and career strengths after taking GURU.

The Learning Disabilities Coordinator and the career counselors also received many requests from students for guidance on disclosing their disabilities to employers. Based on these requests and in consideration of the high level of interest and anxiety some students expressed about going on interviews, the project decided to include students in planning industry/student workshops for the next school year (1993-1994). This would ensure that relevant issues would be addressed and discussed from the viewpoints of prospective employers and LD students.

Ten students in the second year had internships, part-time and full-time jobs; four LD graduates obtained full-time work, and four LD students, continuing their studies, worked part-time in the industry. Two LD students had internships. Fifteen students who sought work during the first two years of the

project were successfully matched to jobs in their career interests.

Dissemination

Dissemination activities for 1992-1993 included a second newsletter, a high school on-site visit, and continuation of the career staff's involvement with outside agencies which serve the learning disabled.

The distribution of the second newsletter followed a pattern similar to the first year: 1500 were mailed to secondary and postsecondary schools across the nation; LD service providers, learning disabled students and their parents received news of the ongoing career activities at F.I.T.

The career staff visited the High School of Fashion Industries where they met with fourteen LD students and their teacher.

Following the conference, the career staff joined the students' teacher at Conway's, a job site where a number of the LD high school students were working. Feedback from the students' supervisor at Conway's indicated what was most helpful to employers working with the learning disabled:

1. Informational literature about learning disabled students and ADA.

2. Visits by career faculty to help employers understand the learning disabled and the laws that protect them in the workplace, and conferences with students' advisors concerning job accommodations helpful to the students.

3. LD students who are well informed about their job-related skills and areas of weakness.

4. Students who have been taught that reliability, cooperation, dedication to completing job tasks, and a willingness to learn are the important traits employers are looking for.

During the 1992-1993 year, the career staff attended educational conferences at the Orton Society, New York University, and the New York City Consortium of Special Service Coordinators, as well as the annual conference sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education in Washington, D.C. These are opportunities to share ideas and information about F.I.T.'s career activities for LD students with other service providers. They helped broaden the career staff's understanding of the services and delivery system the learning disabled require to facilitate their job placement. Participation in these

conferences also provided an opportunity for F.I.T.'s career staff to explain and discuss the college's career services, while distributing additional newsletters.

Finally, F.I.T.'s Career Counseling and Placement Director, who is also president of the Metropolitan New York College Placement Officers' Association, wrote a cover story for the Association's 1993 newsletter (see Appendix D). After its publication, a number of career counselors contacted the career staff to learn more about F.I.T.'s unique job placement services and activities for LD students.

IV. Project Activities (1993-1994)

Inservice Training of F.I.T. Faculty and Staff

After reviewing the faculty inservice workshops, a consensus was reached that more active involvement of both the Internship Office and the Continuing Education Department at F.I.T. would strengthen the career services for learning disabled students. The staff planned two workshops for Internship and Continuing Education counselors. Thirteen counselors were addressed, increasing to 125 the number of faculty/staff reached.

In the first workshop, the LD Coordinator/Career Project Director and the Educational Skills Director met with the F.I.T. Internship Director and seven internship counselors to discuss LD students' learning problems and how they impact on the students' ability to obtain jobs and function in the workplace. Key concepts about the learning disabled were presented and the career support system they need to succeed in the work world discussed. Overall, the workshop fostered a cogent discussion about the internship counselors' role in helping LD students obtain apprenticeships in the fashion industries. Meetings between the project staff and the internship personnel continue with the goal of permanently establishing one-on-one and small group sessions for LD students.

Five members of the Continuing Education Department attended a workshop conducted by the Career Counseling and Placement Director. Awareness of LD students' characteristics, academic and career needs were shared.

Industry Contacts

During Fall 1993, 15 new industry contacts were made by the career counselors, bringing the total for the three-year period to 80. The project continued to seek services and commitments from employers to hire the learning disabled in jobs related to their college studies.

Industry representatives from major retail stores such as The Gap, Macy's, and Fieldcrest Cannon, Inc., as well as representatives from other fashion-related businesses often visit and contact the Career Counseling and Placement Office seeking employees. The career counselors and the Director seized every opportunity to discuss the specialized career services for LD students at F.I.T. The continuation of small group presentations and one-on-one contacts effectively engaged prospective employers in cooperating and participating in the Industry/Student Workshops conducted later in the year.

The project staff is committed to addressing LD students' needs and career issues in a collaborative environment that encourages the educational community, industry representatives, and learning disabled students to work together. This approach is the only assurance that LD students' profiles will be understood, their rights preserved, and employment forthcoming.

Student Participation

During the third year, eight learning disabled students enrolled in the Career Placement Project, increasing the total number of LD student participants to 45. (The 3-year list of students, by major, is at Appendix E.) Eleven students found employment during 1994: three LD graduates and two LD Continuing Education students, were employed full-time; five LD students obtained part-time work; and another LD student worked at an internship. During the three years of the project, 26 LD students found employment in the fashion industries. The students, their places of employment and job titles are at Appendix F.

Three of the eight students enrolled in the third year requested GURU and follow-up conferences with a career consultant. Students expressed concern about their job options, career possibilities within specific areas of the fashion industries, and affirmation that they were well matched to their chosen majors. Of the 45 students served, 90 individualized career conferences focusing on job skill development and/or job search activities were conducted. On the average, there were two conference sessions per student during the third year.

Industry/Student Workshops

The learning disabled students participated in planning two workshops for the 1993-1994 school year. A total of 28 current LD students, three LD alumni working in the industry, five F.I.T. faculty members actively involved with LD students, and the project staff participated in the workshops. Presentations on issues that interested students were given by industry employers and LD graduates during the first half of the workshops; the

second half focused on students discussing the issues from their perspectives. A question-and-answer period closed each workshop.

The first industry/student workshop focused on the "Interview Process". Ten students participated. They met prospective employers, discussed employment problems, the present job market, and employer expectations. A number of interview tips were reviewed as returning LD graduates, prospective employers, and the Career Counseling Director shared interview experiences and pertinent information on the interview process with the students. In addition, the learning disabled students were able to practice their networking skills. Relationships with employers were enhanced through students' use of the business communication techniques which were introduced and practiced in this session.

The second workshop on "Disclosure" was organized in response to a survey of LD students' informational needs. During the workshop, learning disabled alumni speakers shared how they disclosed their disabilities to their employers and requested the minor accommodations they needed to do their jobs well. The 18 LD students in the audience posed many questions such as, When to disclose? How to disclose? How are accommodations requested? The career staff used these questions to create an information sheet for LD students, summarizing the key points of disclosure. It is at Appendix G. Workshop evaluations indicated that those in attendance viewed the workshop discussions and activities as very valuable.

One student's response to the interview services she participated in was: "I feel that the video on the interview process was excellent, and the mock interview I held with Sheryl Sarnak was very helpful when I finally started interviewing for jobs." Another student responded to the Disclosure Workshop by stating, "It's very important to me that you continue this program; I love it!"

Dissemination

Since the career activities developed during the three years of this grant have effectively served the learning disabled population, disseminating the details of F.I.T.'s specialized services and activities was a priority for the project. Reporting through newsletters, presentations, and other national publications continued in the 1993-1994 school year.

A third newsletter documenting the program services and activities was published and 1500 were sent to public and private high schools, colleges and universities across the nation. (The newsletters are at Appendix H.) In this newsletter, the educational institutions received a summary account of the program accomplishments over the three-year period. Many

inquires ensued and F.I.T. scheduled appointments to discuss the college's LD program with LD high school students, their parents and counselors.

The LD Coordinator and an instructor from the F.I.T. Fashion Design Department visited the High School of the Humanities where they met with 41 LD students and their instructor.

National publications, such as the Council for Exceptional Children (ERIC) and NARIC/ABLEDATA, published the news of F.I.T.'s career placement activities and services for the learning disabled.

The project co-hosted a conference with VESID at F.I.T. Handouts outlining LD students' profiles, ADA issues and key aspects of the career counseling model at the college were discussed and explained in detail to the visiting college faculty. Following the conference, the VESID Coordinator requested that the project staff present F.I.T.'s career program model for the learning disabled at other VESID meetings.

In September 1994, an article by F.I.T.'s Career Counseling Director was accepted by the State University of New York Student Affairs newsletter, In Touch, on "Disclosure for the Learning Disabled and the Role of the Career Counselor." This has been disseminated to all Chief Student Affairs officers, and broadly circulated throughout units of the State University of New York.

The dissemination of the Career Placement Project at F.I.T. has been widespread. The response from high school counselors, college service providers, career placement professionals, parents of LD students, and students underscores a high level of interest in career placement programs that specifically serve the learning disabled population now enrolling, in record numbers, in colleges across the country.

V. Evaluation

During follow-up conferences, as we reviewed the evaluations of the career activities for the learning disabled over the three-year period, we identified a number of valuable outcomes. We believe that these outcomes warrant the attention of other postsecondary institutions interested in serving the LD student.

Inservice Faculty Workshop Outcomes

1. All eight career counselors at F.I.T. have been trained to aid LD students. Of the eight, one career counselor and the Career Counseling and Placement Director work directly with the LD Coordinator to assist students in job search and job retention skills, and in obtaining employment. One counselor assists all LD students from the Business and Technology Division of the

college, while other career counselors are assigned to work with LD students enrolled in the Art and Design Division. While working intensely with the students to involve them in career development activities, career selection and job placement, the two career advisors meet with the LD Coordinator once a month to assess the LD students' progress towards becoming pro-active job seekers.

2. As a result of their training, the Career Counseling and Placement Office staff organize career seminars and individualized counseling sessions with more awareness of LD students' needs. The Career Office has special sessions for LD students on resume and cover letter writing, interview techniques, ADA education, and review of disclosure and accommodation issues. These areas have been identified as those where more education and/or practice are needed.

3. GURU, the computerized career guidance system used to aid students in assessment of fashion-related careers, has been made more accessible to reading disabled students by allowing them to use the program with their tutors who act as readers for them.

4. An important outcome of the Career Activities Project is that the Liberal Arts Department has agreed that learning disabled students will receive additional time on the English and Mathematics Placement Examinations, as well as on other liberal arts classroom tests. The department chairs have also asked instructors of occupational courses at F.I.T. to give LD students extra time for exams and projects. In addition, LD students can request and receive exam readers, oral exams, and "in lieu of exam" projects through the Learning Disabilities Office at the college.

5. Coordination of services by the Learning Disabilities Coordinator, the career counselors and other key faculty and staff, such as Continuing Education Department personnel, the Evening Learning Center Supervisor, the Director of the Tutoring/ Communication Skills Center, and the Director of the Educational Opportunity Program, also takes place, so that services to the learning disabled are more efficiently administered.

6. The Internship Office now has a special counselor who collaborates with the LD Coordinator and the Educational Skills Counselor during bi-weekly meetings to assess LD students' skills and counseling needs before assisting them in finding internships. In addition, the internship counselor arranges job-site visits and industry workshops to expose the students to the realities of the work world. Students are also scheduled for one-on-one counseling sessions to aid them in selecting appropriate majors and apprenticeships suited to their talents.

7. A permanent Advisory Board has been formed to garner the support of faculty and staff throughout the college to continuing assistance to the career supervisors. The Board will also help to bring about any future changes needed to better serve F.I.T.'s learning disabled and other students of special needs.

The Board meets each semester to review the services and activities available to LD students, and to assess the effectiveness these services and activities have upon the students' completing their college coursework and obtaining satisfying employment. In addition, the Board will analyze ways to permanently establish those services and activities which have the most positive impact in helping LD students achieve their goals. For example, the success of placement services for the learning disabled led the Advisory Board members to recommend that career counselors continue the specialized services, workshops and other activities for the students.

At the end of each inservice workshop, an evaluation form with a four-point scale (see Appendix I) was distributed to attendees. The responses are recorded on the following table.

EVALUATION OF F.I.T. FACULTY/STAFF WORKSHOPS

Response Category	Number of Responses	Excellent to Very Good	Good	Poor
Overall Rating of Workshops	87	96%	4%	0%
Definition of Learning Disabilities	87	99%	1%	0%
Common LD Traits	87	100%	0%	0%
Teaching Strategies Helpful to LD students	87	99%	1%	0%
Computer Center Strategies Helpful to LD Students	82	49%	51%	0%
Placement Office Services for LD Students	85	99%	1%	0%
LD Program Services for LD Students	86	100%	0%	0%
Laws Affecting LD Students	85	96%	4%	0%
Question and Answer Period	86	93%	7%	0%

In reviewing the evaluations of the F.I.T. faculty/staff workshops, those in attendance responded to the workshops with interest and a willingness to become involved in supporting LD students attending the college. Therefore, we concluded that workshops of this type should be ongoing if an institution is committed to rallying support for LD students' participation in mainstream college programs and competitive jobs and careers.

Outcomes from Workshops and Contacts with Industry Employers

1. Eighty employers were apprised of LD students' profiles. The laws protecting the learning disabled in the workforce were thoroughly reviewed when the Career Counseling and Placement Director met with groups of employers at F.I.T., or when the career counselors worked one-on-one with industry members.

2. All the employers contacted took information back to their companies regarding staff responsibilities to LD applicants and employees under the guidelines of ADA.

3. Sixteen letters from industry employers promising to support LD students in areas of consultation, mentoring, and employment are on file in the Career Counseling and Placement Office.

4. Employers are demonstrating a willingness to attend workshops where they assist LD students in developing their interviewing and networking skills, and connections to the industry.

5. Employer evaluation and feedback have aided the project supervisors in planning other workshops and in addressing job modifications that may be needed by LD employees.

6. The following results have been recorded for the 45 LD students who participated in the career activities during 1991-1994:

In total, 26 of the 45 LD students who participated in the career project obtained employment: Twelve LD students hold full-time jobs which they obtained through the career counselors. For example, one graduate with an A.A.S. degree in Patternmaking Technology is employed by Vogue as a computer pattern designer. Another graduate with the same degree works full-time for Rothschild Patternmaking as a women's wear patternmaker. A third graduate with a degree in Display and Exhibit Design, is employed full-time by Selby Shoes as a display merchandiser.

Three other graduates continue to be aided in their search for work. Of the LD students still enrolled in the college, 10 program participants are now working part-time. Four LD students completed internships with Anne Klein II, Guarino Graphics, Memphis Apparel Group, Inc., and Donna Karan. Three students

dropped out of school because of personal problems. At this time, 16 students are still in school and in contact with the career counselors who continue to help them improve their job-related skills.

7. Of the 26 students who worked either full-time, or part-time, or completed internships, 57% rated the work experience as excellent; 35% rated the experience as very good, and 8% ranked their job as good.

The employment of these LD students in the fashion industries indicates that companies are willing to hire people with disabilities when employers understand the needs and strengths of prospective employees. The employers came to realize that qualified LD employees can make a contribuiton in the workplace with only moderate modifications.

Outcomes from Career/Industry Workshops Conducted for LD Students

1. Follow-up discussions with the LD students and assessment of their evaluation responses indicate that the LD students in the program gained knowledge about job-related areas such as the interview process, disclosure, and job modification.

2. The LD students who attended the workshops said that their networking skills and connections to employers and F.I.T. alumni working in the industry are enhanced by the workshops where they can meet and exchange information with industry employers.

3. Handout sheets summarizing disclosure and other issues discussed in the workshops are now available to LD students.

4. Significantly, LD students participating in the Career Activities Project revealed, during follow-up conferences, that they are more motivated to seek internships, part-time and full-time work experiences when they know that a coordinated support system involving career counselors and industry representatives is in place for them. We have concluded that LD college programs which are in partnership with the Career Counseling and Placement Office will impact on LD students' career success, but may also reinforce LD students' motivation and independence in applying for jobs and in petitioning for the accommodations they need.

5. LD students now help to determine, by responding to a needs survey, the issues and structure of upcoming student/industry workshops.

After each student/industry workshop, students responded to an evaluation form with a four-point scale. They rated all workshop topics and format as very good to excellent.

Students derived valuable information and reassurance from these workshops. Comments written by the LD students on the evaluation forms further underscore their approval of the workshops. For example, one student wrote the following: "I think this is an extremely effective format. I hope there will be additional conferences." Another program participant wrote: "There should be more meetings like this. I enjoyed it very much, and it was wonderful being around people like me."

Outcomes from Individualized Career Counseling and Small Group/Job Skills Workshops

1. LD students are exposed to specialized direction and feedback concerning their career choices. Using GURU, LD students thoroughly trace career paths and select college majors that are better suited to their talents, interests and values.

2. LD students have learned to engage in interviews from a well informed perspective. They realize the importance of studying the company beforehand and preparing questions accordingly.

3. Development of job-readiness skills includes individualized help or small group workshops to develop LD students' skills in writing resumes and cover letters, preparing for interviews, mastering communication skills, developing acceptable portfolios, and learning to access information about available jobs through the database at the college and other sources.

4. LD students' employment interviews are evaluated; follow-up procedures and emotional support in handling rejections have been developed.

5. Counseling for on-the-job adjustment issues, including dealing with difficult employers, disclosure issues, and salary negotiations is available to students before and after graduation.

GURU was used with 17 LD students in order to facilitate the counseling process. It was helpful to the students at all stages of the process. Students using GURU evaluated their experience with the system and the follow-up conferences as follows. On a four-point scale, 99% of the 17 students ranked the GURU program and follow-up conferences as excellent to very good; one percent of the students ranked the service as good.

Several students' responses express how GURU helped them. One student wrote, "It reassured me of my abilities." Another expressed, "It helped me understand the job descriptions and make a choice." A third student stated, "I thought it was very interesting and enjoyable to read about myself. I feel it just gives me more confidence in my strengths."

In addition to GURU, LD students participating in the Career Placement Project evaluated the individualized counseling and small group workshops they attended.

LD Students' Evaluation of Individualized Career Counseling Sessions and Small Group/Job Skills Workshops

Response Category	Number of Responses	Excellent to Very Good	Good	Poor
Development of Interview Skills	39	97%	3%	0%
Development of Resume and Cover Letter Writing Skills	36	94%	6%	0%
Individualized Career Counseling Sessions	45	100%	0%	0%
Overall Evaluation of Individualized Counseling and Small Group Workshops	45	98%	2%	0%

Student attendance for the 180 individualized counseling sessions and small group workshops, scheduled over the three-year period, was 98%. Personalized career direction and counseling, as well as attention to LD students' development of job skills, is crucial to helping LD students learn how to independently access mainstream career services that will lead them to satisfying careers.

Evaluation of LD Students' Satisfaction and Preparedness for the Job Market

After the first year of the career project, we kept in touch with the LD students working in the fashion industries. All five rated their jobs as excellent or very good, and they were pleased with the career services offered to them by the college.

One student working full-time for Vogue Patternmaking Company said, "My boss understands that I have a talent for computer patternmaking, and that my disability won't stop me from doing my work, as long as I have enough time to do it well."

Another student who worked part-time as an assistant to Don Perlis in framing and treating paintings stated, "I am learning so much here. Somehow I am more motivated to measure and cut correctly than when I am in the classroom."

A third student stressed how much the Career Activities Project helped her to feel confident when going on interviews, and to speak up for the accommodations she needed on the job. Specifically, when this former student feels overwhelmed by a new job task, she explains to her supervisor that she needs a demonstration, so she can understand the new procedure.

As the numbers of working students increased during the second and third year of the project, we continued our contact with those working full- and part-time, as well as with those who obtained internships. The majority of the 26 students with work experiences ranked their jobs as excellent or very good. Feedback from the students also underscored the following career project activities as most helpful to them in finding and keeping jobs.

1. The skilled job analysis conducted by the career counselor guides each student in choosing an appropriate career match.

2. Role-playing with career counselors and/or the LD Coordinator concerning "How to Disclose" and/or "How to Request Accommodations" helps LD students to practice how to interact effectively with an employer or supervisor. Students learn to focus on their abilities rather than their disabilities.

3. Participation in Industry/Student Workshops which address career-related issues helps LD students to learn about their rights and responsibilities in the workplace, labor market conditions, business communication skills and networking skills.

4. Informational handout sheets reviewing disclosure and accommodations, as well as the interview process and ADA, gives students a reference of useful literature on issues relevant to the learning disabled.

5. The connection between the career counselors and the business community on behalf of LD students strengthens the students' resolve to become pro-active job seekers.

6. Small group workshops reviewing the interview process, resume and cover letter writing, investigating a company and job functions build LD students' confidence and independence, as well as their job search skills.

7. Work experiences and internships matched to LD students' talents and interests, motivate LD students to do their best and to believe that they are capable of succeeding in the work world.

VI. Problem Area: Industry Support

Although employers are interested in learning about the career project and are generally sympathetic to the needs of the learning disabled, there is difficulty in getting industry members to offer employment opportunities and concurrent supervision that would most benefit the learning disabled student as he or she transitions to the labor market.

The project reached out to the industry at a time when most firms were reeling from the economic recession that has cost New York City over 330,000 jobs since 1989. The apparel manufacturing segment was particularly hard hit and this segment impacts severely on the career paths of many F.I.T. students. While the word of our project was spread among a wide range of industry representatives, we had limited success in encouraging employers to open their doors to our LD students for employment opportunities. Industry members themselves were involved with layoffs, downsizing, and survival during this difficult economic period. When specific jobs were needed for the students, employers felt less comfortable with actually assigning personnel and funds for wages in their shaky business world. In fact, several of the employers who pledged their support in the first year of the grant were unemployed themselves at the point they were again contacted in years two and three, and could not assist us.

Given the employment climate, our projection of industry involvement was too ambitious. For example, when 23 professional and trade associations were contacted to engage industry members in the project, or to allow supervisors to address their associations, we met with no success. With this understandable although disappointing resistance, we continue to work diligently to inform the industry of the project and to educate industry members about the nature and needs of the learning disabled.

For example, we sent newsletters and other materials to remind industry representatives of the career project, and of our success in helping qualified learning disabled students find work. We also take every opportunity to educate industry employers who visit the college about the learning disabled, their talents, and career needs. Our hope is to motivate those who can to hire LD students, as well as to build a foundation of support and future employment opportunities from prospective employers. Specifically, we will continue to try to organize a group of employers to meet with us at designated times, so they can act as advisors concerning the labor market, and serve as mentors to our students. Although we have made progress in encouraging some employers to join us in assisting the learning disabled, more work remains to be done in this area.

We have learned that unless there is a strong personal relationship with a key management executive, in a smaller firm, or a current involvement with the activity of the college, larger firms are most likely a better resource for the counselors who are doing outreach to industry. In most cases, these are the firms who have established Human Resources Departments and an awareness of the value of employing the disabled.

Another effective resource was our Alumni Association membership. Not only were these graduates situated in the industry, but as they had graduated from F.I.T.'s programs, they were keenly aware of the pressures and expectations that exist within each major area as it relates to the demands of the labor market. This perspective was revealed in industry group sessions with students and added an important dimension to the dialogue.

Lastly, employers hiring the learning disabled students reached a consensus on key points concerning LD employees' abilities in the workplace. LD employees:

1. Do well reporting to supervisors if they can present the report or feedback orally or on tape, rather than writing a lengthy report. If a written report is required, however, the use of a computer is invaluable to LD employees.

2. Are capable of giving excellent demonstration lessons of skills mastered to other co-workers. Showing a procedure, rather than writing it up, is a more effective format for them.

3. Need supportive supervision, especially when learning a new job.

4. Do better when deadlines are given far in advance, rather than at the last minute.

5. Learn new procedures more quickly and thoroughly when instructions or directions are written out, step-by-step, or a demonstration lesson is offered. Just telling the learning disabled employee how to do a complicated or new procedure is not enough.

VII. Institutionalization

Because of the success of the Career Activities Project at the Fashion Institute of Technology, the staff will continue the outreach and delivery of specialized services and career counseling that have supported the learning disabled students' transition to jobs in the fashion and related industries. There has been demonstrated success in transitioning the learning disabled from their studies to the workplace, in addition to the success achieved in enlightening industry members about the learning disabled and the needs of this population.

The role that employment plays in this society goes far beyond providing the individual with an income. Personal identities develop not only from our being members of the workforce, but also from the particular occupation that we hold (Jahoda, 1979 & 1977).

The "pre-career" period of exploration is an important time to gain identity and direction as a worker, as youths with disabilities are found to have much lower career aspirations than their non-disabled peers. With this important concept in mind, GURU, F.I.T.'s computerized career guidance system, has been a wonderfully interactive conduit for all students to give and get critical career-related data in a non-threatening and pleasant manner. Students reported enjoying the experience and what they learned about themselves, in relation to specific career areas.

With career counseling sessions geared to explore students' goals and help them develop job strategies, learning disabled students are assisted in assessing their strengths and weaknesses, learning about career options in fields of their choice, understanding how their skills fit into career paths, and establishing realistic and appropriate career goals as part of the students' total education program. We have tailored our services to meet the individual needs of the learning disabled at F.I.T.

The momentum to continue is strong. We plan to go on sharing information regarding the specific nature and needs of this population.

Additional workshops for the learning disabled on campus as well as for our learning disabled graduates will be scheduled. These specialized workshops will be ongoing and a part of the Career Counseling and Placement Department's work plan. Information on the learning disabled will continue to be disseminated to industry and will become integrated into all presentations made to industry representatives.

Project staff will continue to counsel learning disabled students about specific career paths that best fit their strengths and weaknesses. We will reach out to industry and maintain our efforts to educate employers about this population and their requirements, while inviting industry members to help our students learn about industry expectations and labor market conditions.

We have learned that a direct exchange between the career counselors and industry employers, either one-on-one or through presentations to business leaders, is the best way to establish support for the learning disabled within the industry, rather than with written material. Following this initial contact, the career staff sends newsletters, engages in telephone contact, and invites industry representatives to participate in student/industry workshops to strengthen employers' understanding of the learning disabled and the commitment to employ them.

With a longstanding record of service, the members of the Advisory Board have demonstrated commitment, interest, and a willingness to act on behalf of students' welfare and rights at the college and in the workplace.

F.I.T.'s faculty and staff are dedicated to offering the services and accommodations that are needed to ensure that our learning disabled students are successful while at the college and as they move into the workforce. We are working toward coordinating our efforts with the Internship Office, key faculty, and other F.I.T. offices to improve career opportunities for our learning disabled students and graduates as they enter into their chosen career paths.

After completing three years of career development activities for the learning disabled, the career staff at F.I.T. believes that many of the activities and services established at the college can be duplicated by other postsecondary institutions with the same satisfying results. Key recommendations (see Appendix J) for creating career activities for the learning disabled can be used as a blueprint by other institutions organizing a career project for LD students. Adjustments will likely be necessary to accommodate each postsecondary institution's unique educational structure. However, the overall evaluation of the outcomes indicates that the services, activities and collaborative network established at F.I.T. can lead to the successful job placement of learning disabled college students and graduates.

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1 The Director of the Career Counseling and Placement Office; Placement Counselors; Director of the Internship Program; Internship Counselors/Coordinator of Services for Special Needs Students; Chairperson of the Educational Skills Department; Director of the Counseling Center; Dean of Liberal Arts; Dean of Continuing Education; Director of Admissions; Coordinator of Academic Advisement; two Assistant Professors, one from the Fashion Buying and Merchandising Department and one from the Textile/Surface Design Department; the Grants Officer; and the Director of the Educational Opportunity Program at F.I.T.

APPENDIX A

MATERIALS FOR FACULTY AND STAFF WORKSHOPS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Learning Disabilities Definition

II. Characteristics of Learning Disabled (LD) Students - Academic, Social, Vocational

III. General Teaching Strategies Helpful to LD Students

IV. Computer Center Strategies Helpful to LD Students

V. Placement Office and LD Students

VI. Accommodations for LD Students at F.I.T.

VII. Laws Affecting LD Students - in the College and in Their Careers

LEARNING DISABILITY

I. NATURE OF LEARNING DISABILITY

A. What is the nature of learning disabilities?

Specific learning disabilities is a chronic condition of presumed neurological origin which selectively interferes with the development, integration and/or demonstration of verbal and/or non-verbal activities. Learning disabilities can vary in manifestations and in degree of severity. Throughout life the condition can affect: self-esteem, education, vocation, socialization, and/or daily living. Those with learning disabilities have average to above average intelligence.

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF LEARNING DISABLED STUDENTS

A. What are the characteristics of learning disabled (LD) students in academic, social, and vocation areas?

1. Academic - Reading
   a. slow reading rate
   b. comprehension and retention difficulties
   c. difficulty identifying main points and themes
   d. decoding problems

2. Academic - Writing
   a. difficulty with syntax
   b. semantical errors
   c. spelling problems
   d. difficulty organizing written information
   e. poor handwriting
   f. difficulty taking notes
   g. enduring difficulties writing papers

3. Academic - Mathematics
   a. lack of mastery of basic math facts and concepts
   b. poor number concepts - number reversals
   c. difficulty copying numbers correctly from one line to the next
   d. difficulty with the sequences of operational processes

4. Academic - Study Skills
   a. time management difficulties

b. lack of use of library materials
c. lack of organization with notes and compositions
d. short attention span
e. difficulty mastering study skills and test taking techniques and/or test formats

5. Language Skills/Social Skills
a. difficulty in oral expression
b. difficulty speaking grammatically correct English
c. difficulty concentrating on and comprehending what is heard
d. difficulty adjusting to new people
e. poor adjustment to new routines
f. misinterpretation of social cues

6. Vocational
a. difficulty getting jobs
b. problems with resume preparation
c. unprepared with appropriate questions and answers for job interviews
d. difficulty organizing job search information and efforts
e. lack of ability to assess career choices without appropriate guidance
f. difficulty working at rapid pace on the job

III. HELPFUL TEACHING STRATEGIES

A. What are the basic teaching strategies helpful to LD students in post secondary institutions?

1. offer a detailed course syllabus that reviews materials to be covered, due dates of assignments, student evaluation system
2. present overview of lesson at opening of class and summary of key points at the end of the class
3. review technical vocabulary with students
4. give assignments in printed format
5. provide study-type questions that demonstrate exam format
6. allow time for questions, answers, and review before exams
7. offer individual accommodations to LD students with a severe disability
(see Part VI, F.I.T accommodations)

IV. COMPUTER CENTER STRATEGIES

A. What Computer Center strategies are helpful to LD students learning to use the computer or a new program?

1. use visuals to teach
2. provide individual demonstrations
3. check mastery through students' demonstration of skill level
4. seek verbal feedback - offer verbal feedback on students' weaknesses and strengths
5. use of printed guides may require additional information and instruction for LD students
6. greater degree of demonstration may be needed for LD students as compared to non-LD students
7. more personalized attention may be necessary

V. PLACEMENT OFFICE AND LD STUDENTS

A. How does the Placement Office aid LD students in finding an appropriate major and/or job?

1. career planning and placement begins in students' year of graduation
2. helps students develop interpersonal, job-related skills
3. exposes students to GURU, for review of interest, abilities and values, which can lead to appropriate preparatory classes, programs, and employment
4. provides opportunity for extensive job exploration; many LD students have not worked before college
5. provides suggestions for work experiences while in college or during interim sessions according to students' ability to attend school and work
6. provides job search information in manner appropriate to students'individual needs
   a. written instructions for some
   b. videotape job information for others
   c. develops work readiness; offers information on career selection and job search
      1) group and one-on-one resume writing workshops
      2) group workshops to review interviewing techniques - role playing helpful to LD students
      3) reviews employer/employee job responsibilities with students

(continued)

4) LD students need advocates from placement to educate industry and industry employers about their abilities, strengths and difficulties

VI. F.I.T. ACCOMMODATIONS

A. What accommodations are extended to LD students at the Fashion Institute of Technology?

(Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, colleges could be required to provide a variety of opportunities to LD students.)

1. diagnosis of undiagnosed LD students through analysis of English Placement Test
   a. reading
   b. writing/spelling
   c. recommendations for formal diagnosis, if necessary
2. academic advisement - monitoring of students' progress and course load on a semester by semester basis, planning alternate routes to graduation
3. specialized tutoring services (reading, writing, study skills and content tutors)
4. computer availability for writing papers and for spell-check programs
5. computer software programs to assist in test-taking and study skills development
6. taped textbooks
7. counseling to focus on:
   a. personal coping skills of students
   b. independent functioning, and
   c. self-advocacy
   d. career guidance (see section of Placement Office)

B. What accommodations are offered with the discretion of F.I.T. instructors/administrators?

1. extended time for examinations
2. exam readers, writers, proctor clarification, and in-lieu-of-exam projects
3. taping of lectures
4. extra office time with instructors
5. dictionary use for written exams
6. use of calculators for some math courses

(continued)

7. exam format modification - multiple choice to essay or vice-versa, oral exams, extra credit for special projects
8. alternate methods of showing course mastery
9. course substitutions or waivers when warranted
10. part-time enrollment without a negative effect on financial aid

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Garrett, Mary K., Ed.D, and Welch, Edward L., Ph.D, Serving the Student With a Learning Disability: A Manual for SUNY Faculty and Professional Staff

PURPOSE, APPLICABILITY AND CONSTRUCTION

OF TITLE I OF THE

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) REGULATIONS

(proposed regulations implementing the employment section, Title I, of the ADA of 1990)

I. PURPOSE

A. What is the purpose of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?

1. signed into law on July 26, 1990
2. states that qualified individuals with disabilities must be given the same consideration for employment as those without disabilities
3. preference for disabled individuals is not required - not an affirmative action law, but a non-discrimination statute.

II. PERTINENT TERMS

A. What constitutes a disability under ADA?

1. individual must have a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of the person's major life activities
2. must have a record of such an impairment or
3. must be regarded by the "covered entity" (employer, employment agency, etc.) in question.

B. What is meant by impairment under ADA?

1. an individual limited in performing basic activities that the average person in the general population can perform with little or no difficulty
2. example - any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, any mental or psychological disorder that prevents performance of an activity with the same level of ease that the average person in the population would perform the activity, and is chronic in nature

C. What is meant by qualified individuals with disabilities?

1. persons who can perform the essential functions of the position held or desired with or without reasonable accommodations
2. persons who satisfy the prerequisites for the position, for example, appropriate educational

background, employment experience, skills, licenses, etc. (all job-related selection criteria except that which cannot be met because of a disability)

D. What are reasonable accommodations under ADA?

1. any change in the work environment or in the way things are usually done that enables an individual with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunity in the job application process and work environment, with the same benefits and privileges of non-disabled individuals

2. The several kinds of accommodations are:
   a. accessible and usable facilities
   b. job restructuring
   c. part-time or modified work schedule
   d. provisions of qualified readers
   e. adjusted or modified exams, training materials or policies

E. What is meant by essential job functions?
(primary job duties that are intrinsic to the employment position the individual holds or desires)

F. When does the ADA go into effect?
1. July 26, 1992 - for employers with 15 to 24 employees
2. July 26, 1994 - for employers with 15 to 24 employees

(ADA is modeled on regulations implementing Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which was the first Federal Civil Rights law stating that persons with disability cannot be excluded from any program or activity receiving Federal funds - implemented in 1977 under Health, Education and Welfare.)

G. How will employment of qualified individuals with disabilities be enforced?
(under the same procedures now applicable to race, sex, national origin, and religious discrimination under Title VII of the Civil rights Act of 1964.)

H. How are complaints filed against employers who will not comply with the ADA?
1. with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or
2. with designated state human rights agencies

(Should the proposed Civil Rights Act of 1991 become law, individuals would also be able to sue for damages under

the ADA.)

I. What are possible remedies for valid grievances?
   1. hiring
   2. reinstatement
   3. back pay
   4. court orders to stop discrimination

J. Who must comply to the ADA?
   1. private employers
   2. state and local governments
   3. employment agencies
   4. labor unions

K. Who does not have to comply to the ADA?
   1. employers with less that 15 employees
   2. U.S. Government
   3. Indian tribes
   4. bona fide private membership clubs other than labor organizations that are exempt from taxation under Section (501C) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986

III. APPLICABILITY AND CONSTRUCTION

A. How do other standards of other laws affect ADA?
   1. ADA cannot be used as a defense for failing to meet a higher standard under another, nor does
   2. existence of a lesser standard provide a defense for meeting a higher standard under ADA.

(ADA does not preempt medical or safety requirements under Federal, state, county or local laws consistent with ADA and designed to protect the public health; however, ADA does preempt inconsistent requirements established by a state or local law for safety or "security" sensitive reasons.)

B. Can an employer defend violation of ADA?
   1. Employers cannot defend violating ADA by relying on the obligation to comply with requirements of a state or local law that imposes prohibitions or limitations on eligibility of qualified individuals with disabilities to practice an occupation or profession.

   2. Example: a dyslexic (non-reader) cannot be denied a job if some local or state law imposes prohibitions or limitations on hiring a person with a reading difficulty. If reading is required as part of a job training program or job responsibilities, employers must accept the fact that the "reasonable accommodations" of providing a reader would give the dyslexic person the opportunity to function responsibly with tasks required in job training or on the job.

Rumpel, Fritz, "In the Mainstream," Vol. 16, Number 3.

APPENDIX B

INDUSTRY & ALUMNI PARTICIPATION

Industry Members

Filene's Basement
Streamline Industries
Sanofi Beaute, Inc.
Tangeante Designs
Crest Apparel
Brooks Brothers
Whisper Soft Mills
Barbizon Hotel
Harper Collins Publishers
Vermont Teddy Bear Company
Dan River Mills
Carlisle Collection
Fieldcrest Cannon, Inc.
Scholastic Books
London Fog
Phillips Van Heusen Company

Alumni

Ed Newman - E. Newman Consultants
Roy Alexander - Smith, Kline, Beecham
Wilson Reimers - JBJ Fabrics
Jan Strass - Jan Strass Associates
Ruben Cruz - Joelle Bridals
Jennifer Hughes - The Bibb Company
Rena Sussman - R. Sussman Consulting
Mrinal Thadani - RH Macy
Carmen White - Carlisle Collections
Sheila Stewart - Lee Stewart Associates
Howard Lawrence - Howard Lawrence Designs
Mary Chan - Leslie Fay Sportswear
Derrick Fields - JB Wright
Catherine Napoli - unaffiliated
Carrie Bloom - unaffiliated

APPENDIX C

REQUESTS TO CLASSROOM FACULTY FOR ACCOMMODATIONS FOR LD STUDENTS

Fashion Institute of Technology Seventh Avenue at 27th Street
New York City 10001-5992

A College of Art and Design,
Business and Technology
State University of New York

Date_____

To: _____

From: Gail Ballard (Coordinator of Services for Students with Special Needs)

Your student,_____, is registered with the Learning Disabilities Office at F.I.T. Because of processing difficulties when reading and writing, additional time for taking classroom exams is an accommodation that is extended to your student. If this accommodation conflicts with your teaching schedule, I can make arrangements for your student to take exams, with extended time, in the Learning Disabilities Office in B-602. A room and proctor will be provided. If you would like to speak weith me further concerning this matter, my office hours are as follows:_____

_____

The phone extension at F.I.T. is (7994); my home phone number is (212) 529-6921, after 7 p.m.

Thank you for considering this request.

P.S. Course Number_____

Class Hour/ Hours:_____

Under the program of the State University of New York and sponsored by the Board of Education of the City of New York in cooperation with the Educational Foundation for the Fashion Industries

Fashion Institute of Technology Seventh Avenue at 27th Street
New York City 10001-5992

A College of Art and Design,
Business and Technology
State University of New York

Date_____

To:_____

From: Gail Ballard (Coordinator of Services for Students with Special Needs)

Your student,_____, is registered with the Learning Disabilities Office at F.I.T. Because your student is dyslexic and has difficulty processing while struggling to read, an exam reader is offered as an accommodation to your student. If this accommodation conflicts with your schedule, I can provide an exam reader, and make arrangements for your student to take tests or exams in the Learning Disabilities Office in B-602. A proctor will also be provided.

If you would like to speak with me further concerning this matter, my office hours are as follows:_____

_____

My extension at the college is (7994), and my home phone number is (212) 529-6921, after 7 p.m.

Thank you for considering this accommodation.

P.S.

Course Number:_____

Class Hour/Hours:_____

Under the program of the State University of New York and sponsored by the Board of Education of the City of New York in cooperation with the Educational Foundation for the Fashion Industries

Fashion Institute of Technology Seventh Avenue at 27th Street
New York City 10001-5992

A College of Art and Design,
Business and Technology
State University of New York

Date_____

To:_____

From: Gail Ballard (Coordinator of Services for Students with Special Needs)

Your student,_____, is registered with the Learning Disabilities Office at F.I.T. Because of a severe writing disability, your student is requesting an oral examination.

If this accommodation conflicts with your schedule, I can provide an examiner and a tape recorder, so that your student can receive this accommodation in the Learning Disabilities Office in B-602.

If you would like to speak with me further concerning this matter, my office hours are as follows:_____

_____

My extension at the college is (7994), and my home phone number is (212) 529-6921, after 7 p.m.

Thank you for considering this accommodation.

P.S.

Course Number:_____

Class Hour/Hours:_____

Under the program of the State University of New York and sponsored by the Board of Education of the City of New York in cooperation with the Educational Foundation for the Fashion Industries

Fashion Institute of Technology Seventh Avenue at 27th Street
New York City 10001-5992

A College of Art and Design,
Business and Technology
State University of New York

Date_____

TO:_____

FROM: Gail Ballard (Coordinator of Services for Students with Special Needs)

Your student,_____, is enrolled in the F.I.T.'s Program for Students with Special Needs. At this time your student has been advised to request a "WD", withdrawal, from your class,_____, because of the following: a heavy course load, personal reasons, withdrawal from the college. Your student has been advised that it may be necessary to re-enroll in the course to complete a degree program at the college.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Under the program of the State University of New York and sponsored by the Board of Education of the City of New York in cooperation with the Educational Foundation for the Fashion Industries

Fashion Institute of Technology Seventh Avenue at 27 Street
New York City 10001-5992

A College of Art and Design,
Business and Technology
State University of New York

Date_____

TO:_____

FROM: Gail Ballard (Coordinator of Services for Studenrs with Special Needs)

The following students are registered with the Learning Disabilities Office at F.I.T., and they are requesting extended time to complete the _____Placement Examination:

Students' Names	-	College Majors
1._____		1._____
2._____		2._____
3._____		3._____
4._____		4._____
5._____		5._____

If you would like the Learning Disabilities Coordinator to administer the aforementioned exam, please send the examinations and instructions to Gail Ballard in B-602. The test booklets will be returned to your office immediately after the students complete the examination.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Under the program of the State University of New York and sponsored by the Board of Education of the City of New York in cooperation with the Educational Foundation for the Fashion Industries

APPENDIX D

PROGRAM PUBLICITY MATERIALS

MNYC POST

Metropolitan New York College Placement Officers Association

SPRING 1993 NEWSLETTER

FIT Establishes a Unique Program to Assist Learning Disabled Students

by Roslyn Dolber

In what may be the first of its kind, The Fashion Institute of Technology has developed a grant written by Roslyn Dolber and Irene Buchman that provides a variety of services to assist disabled students make the transition from school to work. What is unique is the active participation by industry representatives--those who are potential employers of the program's graduates. The project has already received strong encouragement for its four-pronged training approach that targets students, advisors, career/placement counselors and industry members.

Funded by a grant from the US Department of Education, this program is a collaborative effort between FIT's Career Counseling and Placement and Educational Skills departments. While the learning disabilities component focuses on students' learning needs and the accommodations required in a college setting, the career placement program offers specialized and intensive career counseling, job search skills development and placement opportunities.

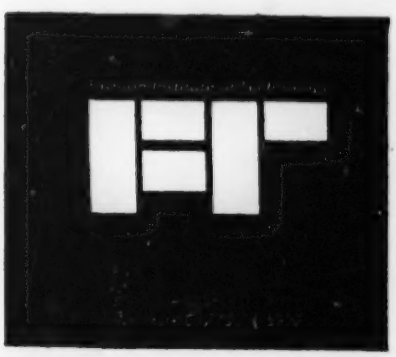
All learning disabled students meet individually with the Learning Disabled Coordinator to determine the extent and scope of needed services to assist the student in completing their degree--individualized tutoring in all subjects (both liberal arts and technical), academic advisement and special accommodations are available. Tutoring sessions cover reading, writing and spelling skills, instruction in major area courses, computer literacy and improving study skills. The coordinator is able to assist students in arranging the best course sequences as well as semester course loads, in an effort to move the student toward fulfilling degree requirements. In cooperation with classroom faculty, learning disabled students are provided extended time for exams, exam readers, taped textbooks and study notes and guides.

Students then meet with career counselors who take into account the nature of the disability and assist students in determining specific career goals best suited to their skills and interests. Industry representatives involved in this project provide real-life pictures of industry standards and expectations by meeting with students and allowing them to make on-site visits for extended periods.

Students also access GURU, a user-friendly career guidance computer system designed expressly for the majors at the college and encourages students to examine work style preferences, values, interests and abilities. The system allows users to have a printout of job possibilities and specific job descriptions based on each student's particular capabilities. Follow-up sessions allow for exploration of the nature of these jobs and a chance to evaluate the 'fit' between their skills and the job demands. Students can then map out a plan to take appropriate skills courses and find relevant part-time, summer or freelance jobs in preparation for full-time employment upon graduation.

This grant program is geared to help students develop job search strategies and plan their job hunting campaigns. Students receive one-on-one assistance with resume writing, portfolio and interview preparation. Counselors assist students in searching for appropriate referrals and handling interviews. Job interviewing skills are further enhanced in workshop settings. Once students secure part-time or freelance positions, counselors provide ongoing support and encourage students to develop solutions to work-related issues.

Program statistics show that with the wide array of support services in place, learning disabled students achieve their educational goals at FIT. They experience success and become competitive in the labor market while earning a college degree and developing job experience in industry!



APPENDIX E

STUDENT PARTICIPANTS BY MAJOR

Learning Disabled Students Enrolled for Career Project Services
(1991-1994)

	Students' Names	Students'Majors
1.	Robert Kelly	Fine Arts
2.	Amy Sperber	Fashion Design
3.	Christine Benedick	Home Furnishings
4.	Pennina Edwards-El	PMT
5.	Michael Shapiro	Fashion Design
6.	Maria Wright	Fashion Design
7.	Sandra Manigault	Textile Design
8.	Tali Ariely	Display and Exhibit
9.	Carolyn Sumner	Textile Design/ Marketing
10.	Erich Preis	Fine Arts
11.	Kim Narkie	FBM
12.	Tanya Melloul	FBM
13.	Alfa Abreu	Product Management
14.	Loren Miller	AD. and Comm.
15.	Regina Bryant	PMT
16.	Barbara Diglio	Marketing Management
17.	Stephanie Karp	FBM
18.	Kerry Keeney	Accessories Design
19.	Debra Nevins	FBM
20.	Justine Rudolph	PMT
21.	Nedda Rahaman	Illustration
22.	Alexandra De La Cruz	Advertising/Comm.
23.	Siu Chan	Fashion Design
24.	Andrea Qren	Marketing
25.	Yolanda Payne	Textile/Marketing
26.	Leza Robinson	Textile/Marketing
27.	Barbara Marcus	Advertising & Design
28.	Janine Crocitto	Marketing Comm.
29.	Tressa Allen	PMT
30.	Anna Solano	Fine Arts
31.	Donna Harari	FBM
32.	Kim Rowe	Marketing
33.	Elaine Wallenstein	PMT
34.	Catherine San Antonio	Accessories Design
35.	Linda Moses	Illustration
36.	Maria Zuffi	Fashion Design
37.	Edith Rivera	Textile Surface Design
38.	Gregory Picolli	Textile Surface Design
39.	Liza Mancia	FBM
40.	Karen Scott	PMT
41.	Margie Porter	FBM
42.	Stephen Kenny	Fine Arts
43.	Cordia Chevannes	PMT
44.	Lisa Ullman	FBM
45.	Judy Austin	PMT

Students Working Full-time

1.	*Barbara Diglio*	1. The Children's Hour (sales Assistant)
2.	Kerry Keeney	2. Standard Simon Accessories (Designs Merchandise for Catalogue on Computer)
3.	Kim Narkie	3. Macy's Department Store (Sales/Buyer's Assistant)
4.	Stephanie Karp	4. Works in Family Business (Designer of Hair Accessories/ Buyer)
5.	Yolanda Payne	5. Maryon Dyeing and Finishing Inc. (Quality Control Manager-Routes Fabrics through the Dye Process)
6.	Michael Shapiro	6. Selby"s Shoes-(Sales)
7.	Karen Scott	7. Vogue Patterns-(Computer Pattern-maker)
8.	Donna Harari	8. Coast To Coast Industries (Buyer/Salessperson)
9.	Margie Porter	9. Lord and Taylor's (Sales/Buyer Training)
10.	Cordia Chevannes	10. A&S Department Store (Sales)
11.	Lisa Ullman	11. Bennetton's (Sales)
12.	Debre Nevins	12. Business Assistant-Family Business

Students With Part-Time Work Experience

1.	Barbara Marcus	1. Giuarino Graphics (Worked as Graphic Artist)
2.	Amy Sperber	2. Worked as assistant hat designer to boutique owner
3.	Kim Rowe	3. Paragon (Sales)
4.	Robert Kelly	4. Don Perlis (worked at making frames and restoring paintings

5.	Tressa Allen	5.	Worked as Pattermaker
6.	Liza Mancia	6.	A&S - (Cosmetic Sales)
7.	Maria Wright	7.	Freelance dress designing
8.	Sandra Manigualt	8.	Freelance T-Shirt and accessories designs
9.	Tanya Melloul	9.	J. Crew (patternmaking)
10.	Erich Preis	10.	Works as Freelance artist

Students With Internship Experience

1.	Alpha Abreu	1.	Anne Klein II- (Worked with designers in preparation for Market Week)
2.	Pennina Edwards-El	2.	Memphis Apparel Group Inc. (Worked at correctingpatterns, checking samples and fittings)
3.	Carolyn Sumner	3.	Couetaulds Fibers, Inc.- Assistant to Fashion Marketing Director)
4.	Andrea Oren	4.	Donna Karan - Assistant to Marketing Director

APPENDIX G

DISCLOSURE MATERIALS

DISCLOSURE

For most job hunters, the issue of *disclosure* is a real concern. Just how much or how little to reveal about yourself can present a dilemma to those facing the prospect of job interviews. Learning Disabled applicants are often plagued by the issue of what to discuss about their particular limitations. What is important to realize is that *you* are always in charge of that decision. And of course, never tell what you feel you may regret or what you are uncomfortable in revealing!

The key is for you to decide *when* and *what* you choose to tell--*if* you feel you wish to--and then disclose it in the most *positive* way possible. This may take a bit of practice, but is really no different than any job applicant attempting to describe a weak area in a positive manner. It is important for you to be able to talk about which compensatory strategies work well for you. Do you learn more easily if you have a demonstration, rather than by listening to directions or reading instructions? Make sure you can talk about your learning style with ease.

Always ask yourself if disclosure of your disability at this time supports your aim of getting hired. You might then think of disclosing information about your disability once you have indicated to the interviewer your areas of strength and special skills. And you must be specific about your limitations. It will never be helpful for you to declare that you have learning problems without a brief detail of what the limitation is and how you have learned to deal with it.

It may be helpful to keep the following statements in mind as you think about how you would discuss your own limitations..and do remember that *every* worker has both strengths and weaknesses:

> If you are a SLOW WORKER, you might want to talk about the fact that you are careful and thorough in your work although it may take you a little longer to complete your tasks.
> or
> If you have a POOR HANDWRITING, you would learn to type all your memos and reports or even re-write whatever is illegible.
> or
> If you have POOR MATH skills, tell an interviewer how you always use a calculator to ensure your work is accurate and that you double check it as well.

Think about areas of your own that you need to give more attention to, and then decide how to *positively* describe it. If you are convinced that your coping strategy works well for you, let the interviewer know.

Remember that some learning disabled people choose to keep their disability a well hidden secret and do an expert job of working around their shortcomings. Others may feel more open and freer to let people know that they will require certain accommodations. They may evaluate how much they wish to disclose in each new situation where it is appropriate to discuss the issue.

When is disclosure not appropriate?

- Never list your disability or areas of weakness on your resume.
- Do not give permission for disclosure of your learning disability in letters of recommendation that others write for you.
- It is never appropriate in a job interview if you feel unwilling to disclose your disability or if it is unrelated to the job for which you are interviewing.

Remember that the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) allows the following:

- Employers may ask about your ability to perform specific job functions.
- Employers may NOT ask about the existence or severity of a disability.

RECOMMENDED READING:

Job Strategies for People with Disabilities by Witt-1992

Peterson's Guide (Chapter 8) "To Disclose or not to Disclose"

Putting Ability to Work: Disability, Career Development, and Employment ($18)--Career Connections, Disability Services, University of Minnesota, 12 Johnston Hall, 101 Pleasant Street SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455

Roslyn Dolber 5/94
Career Services for Learning Disabled
Grant H078C10031–G43

DISCLOSURE RESOURCES

"TO DISCLOSE OR NOT TO DISCLOSE?" RUTHERFORD AND PARRY; 1993. CAREERS AND THE DISABLED.

"YOU DON'T SAY (BUT YOU SHOULD)." MYERS, PETER; 1992. CAREERS AND THE DISABLED.

"TALKING ABOUT YOUR DISABILITY IN THE INTERVIEW" - A QUESTION AND ANSWER STUDY GUIDE. MILT WRIGHT AND ASSOCIATES, INC.

HANDOUT FOR STUDENTS - UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA - SMITH.

APPENDIX H

PROGRAM NEWSLETTERS

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

F.I.T. Establishes Unique Program to Assist Learning Disabled

In what may be the first of its kind, the Fashion Institute of Technology has developed a learning disabilities project that provides a variety of services to help learning disabled students make the transition from college to the workplace. Unique among the provisions is the active participation by and intervention of industry representatives–those who are the potential employers of the program's graduates. The operational plan for the program has already received strong encouragement for its four-pronged training approach targeting students, advisors, the Career Counseling and Placement Department, and

In cooperation with the classroom faculty, learning disabled students will also be provided extended time for examinations, exam readers, taped textbooks, and study notes and guides to help them in their studies.

Career and Placement Counseling Professionals Address Special Needs

Long committed to placing its graduates in jobs leading to exciting careers in the fashion and related industries, F.I.T. can now extend these services to the learning disabled student. Through the college's Career Counseling and Placement Department, students meet with specially trained career counselors who take into account the nature of based on each student's particular interests, skills, and values.

In follow-up sessions with career counselors, students explore the nature of these jobs, evaluating the "fit" between their skills and the job demands. Students map out a plan to take the appropriate courses and find relevant part-time, summer, or freelance jobs in preparation for full-time employment upon graduation.

Students Learn Job Search Strategies

The learning disabilities program helps students develop job search strategies and provides job listings as well. Students also receive one-on-one assistance with resume writing, portfolio and

range of liberal arts courses, as well as counseling and placement services, extracurricular activities, and access to the cultural life of New York City.

Since its graduates are prepared to enter design, management, advertising, production engineering, merchandising, and other fashion-oriented fields, F.I.T. welcomes students with special aptitudes.

F.I.T. offers full-time A.A.S. programs in Accessories Design, Advertising and Communications, Advertising Design, Display and Exhibit Design, Fashion Buying and Merchandising, Fashion Design, Fine Arts, Illustration, Interior Design, Jewelry Design, Manufacturing Management: Apparel Products and Related Industries, Menswear, Pattern-

Department of Education, this service is an interdisciplinary project between F.I.T.'s Educational Skills Learning Disabled Student Service and the Career Counseling and Placement Department. While the learning disabilities program focuses on students' learning needs and the accommodations required in a college setting, the new career placement program offers specialized career counseling, job search skills development, and job placement opportunities.

Program Focuses on Individualized Support

All learning disabled students meet individually with the coordinator for learning disabilities to determine what services are needed to help them earn a degree from F.I.T. Such services include individualized tutoring, academic advisement, and special accommodations.

Tutoring sessions cover reading, writing, and spelling skills, as well as instruction in content courses, computer literacy, and improving study skills.

The coordinator for learning disabilities assists the student in arranging the best course sequence in a particular major, as well as semester course loads for fulfilling degree requirements.

skills. Counselors also provide students with information about labor market conditions and the variety of career paths available in different segments of the industry.

Visiting industry representatives provide students with a real-life picture of industry expectations and the realities of the work world.

Computer "GURU" Provides Job Leads

Learning disabled students also benefit from GURU, a user-friendly career guidance computer program that encourages students to examine their work style preferences, values, interests, and abilities.

This program, which has been custom-tailored to the 22 majors at F.I.T., provides printouts of job possibilities (by title), and specific job descriptions

jobs and handling job interviews. Job interviewing skills are further enhanced by role playing workshops. Once students have part-time jobs, counselors provide ongoing support and encourage students to develop solutions to work-related problems.

Program Shows Great Promise

Program statistics show that with the wide array of support services in place, learning disabled students achieve their educational goals at F.I.T. Students experience success through occupational training and become competitive in the labor market. Most important, they earn a college degree and develop job experience in the industry.

F.I.T. at a Glance

The Fashion Institute of Technology is a State University of New York (SUNY) college of art and design, business and technology which prepares men and women for careers in fashion and its related professions and industries, and also provides leadership, research, and other services to those professions and industries.

As a college committed to career education with a broad cultural background, F.I.T. offers not only essential professional preparation, but also a full

offers baccalaureate programs in the business and technology and art and design fields as well as Master of Arts programs.

The college serves more than 12,000 students yearly, who attend day, summer, winterim, and evening sessions.

For further information contact:
Dr. Irene Buchman
Project Director
or
Gail Ballard
Coordinator
Learning Disabilities Program
Fashion Institute of Technology
Seventh Avenue at 27 Street
New York City 10001-5992
212-760-7994

Educational opportunities at F.I.T. are offered without regard to sex, race, color, national origin, age, or handicap.

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Career Placement Project Moves Forward

F.I.T.'s Learning Disabilities/Career Placement project continues its work in the development of a model program, designed for use at F.I.T. as well as adaptation by other colleges. The program's purpose is to prepare college graduates who are learning disabled for the transition from the classroom to the workplace.

With funding provided by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the staff has designed and implemented programs to improve the career success of LD students. At the same time, they are able to take advantage of F.I.T.'s strong working relationship with the and offer the necessary academic accommodations. For instance, the F.I.T. faculty now acknowledge the need to offer extended time for learning disabled students during placement exams and course content tests. In addition, the faculty is also supportive of developing these students' writing skills through the use of computerized word processing programs such as WordPerfect. Computer workshops are regularly conducted for small groups of learning disabled students requesting this service.

Faculty and staff reported these workshops also prepared them to consider the career options available to the LD population at F.I.T. and has involved them in the college's commitment to

Workshops Help Faculty Understand Student Needs

In an effort to provide learning disabled students with the interview skills needed to be successful in their job search, an innovative employer/student workshop has been developed. A number of industry professionals—potential employers—and the director of the Career Counseling and Placement Department recently shared information with students on how to prepare for a successful interview. In addition, recent graduates of the LD program who had conducted successful job searches shared their interviewing experiences with the group, and handouts offering valuable interviewing tips and strategies were

mission on both her purchases and sales. Donna says that her present job offers her an excellent learning environment and at the same time she loves her work.

F.I.T. Wins Recognition for Innovative Program

F.I.T. was recently recognized with an honorable mention in the ninth annual American Association of Community Colleges/J.C. Penney/National Organization on Disability awards competition. The competition is designed to recognize two-year colleges that have improved the quality of life for students with disabilities.

A.A.C.C. President David R. Pierce remarked in his congratulatory letter to

students with learning disabilities.

Among the goals of the F.I.T. model are to help students assess their professional strengths and weaknesses, learn about career options, and set career goals that match their talents; to educate college faculty and staff as well as fashion industry employers about learning disabilities; and to garner industry's help in developing work experiences for the students.

Workshops Assist Faculty in Understanding Students' Needs

During the course of the project's development at F.I.T., the program director, in conjunction with the career grant director, and the director of the Career Counseling and Placement Department, conducted a series of workshops on the F.I.T. campus. The seminars, directed to members of the liberal arts and art and design faculty, as well as members of the Student Advisory Council, the Career Counseling and Placement Department, the Internship Department, the Alumni Association Board of Directors, the Division of Continuing Education, and the dormitory supervisors and staff, focused on cultivating support for LD students throughout the college.

One of the goals of the workshops was to maximize services for the student who is learning disabled. Those in day-to-day contact with the students now recognize the needs of the students and can refer them for appropriate services

Career Counseling and Placement Offers Individualized Services

At F.I.T., specialized career counseling services are tailored to meet the individual needs of students who are learning disabled. The Career Counseling and Placement Department now has counselors to assist students in their career evaluation and job search. Exploration of students' talents, interests, and goals is conducted by counselors familiar with the students' specific case histories.

Once the student is ready for employment, the coordinator of the Learning Disabilities Program works with the career counselor to secure job opportunities for the student. Together, the LD coordinator and the counselor consider the student's individual profile, weaknesses and strengths, and any accommodations that may be needed at the job site. After the student meets with the career counselor a few times, individualized and small group sessions on resume and cover letter writing, as well as interviewing, are held. Students also have the opportunity to learn and practice communications skills through the use of video tapes. Students report the individualized career services have provided them with the job search skills needed to secure employment.

Students enrolled in the career counseling program are getting jobs in the fashion industry, according to college records. Most students have secured either part-time or full-time employment, indicating that the goal is achievable.

with employers and alumni, thus securing valuable business contacts. Students attending the workshop reported that they were more confident and better prepared to participate in the interviewing process and to seek employment.

Students Work in the Industry

Learning disabled students graduating from F.I.T. are getting jobs in the industry in careers related to their college preparation.

Pennina, a Patternmaking Technology graduate, received an internship offer from Memphis Apparel Group, Inc. Pennina's duties included correcting patterns and checking samples and fittings as well as learning to do sample construction. She says this internship experience will prove invaluable to her preparation for permanent employment.

Barbara graduated from F.I.T. in May 1993 with a degree in Advertising Design. She spent six months as an intern at Guarino Graphics, working as an assistant to the production manager. In this position, she learned to create images on the computer. At the end of her internship, Barbara decided to work as a freelancer and earned $800 on her first two projects.

Donna is a 1993 Fashion Buying and Merchandising graduate. She is now employed by Coast to Coast Industries as a children's wear buyer and salesperson. She earns a base salary plus commissions.

F.I.T. Offers Many Specialized Career Education Programs

The Fashion Institute of Technology is a State University of New York (SUNY) college of art and design, business and technology which prepares men and women for careers in fashion and its related professions and industries, and also provides leadership, research, and other services to those professions and industries.

The Learning Disabilities Program at F.I.T. stems from the college's commitment to improving the compatibility of education and work. Since its inception in 1985, the program has improved the career success of students with learning disabilities through specialized programs.

For further information contact:
Dr. Irene Buchman, project director
or
Gail Ballard, coordinator
Learning Disabilities Program
Fashion Institute of Technology
Seventh Avenue at 27 Street
New York City 10001-5992
212-760-7994

Educational opportunities at F.I.T. are offered without regard to age, gender, race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, or veteran status.

APPENDIX I

PROGRAM EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Please rate today's workshop in terms of information you received about learning disabled students at the college level, the program at FIT, Placement Office services for the students, and the current laws affecting learning disabled (LD) students in school and in the workforce.

1. Overall Evaluation of the Workshop and Materials

   Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

2. Evaluation of Each Area of Discussion:

   A. Definition of Learning Disabilities

      Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

   B. Manifestations of Learning Disabilities - Academic, Social, and Vocational

      Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

   C. Teaching Strategies Helpful to LD Students

      Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

   D. Computer Center Strategies Helpful to LD Students

      Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

   E. Placement Office Services Available to LD Students

      Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

   F. Accommodations at FIT for LD Students

      Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

   G. Laws Affecting LD Students

      Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

   H. Question/Answer Period

      Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

3. Comments and Suggestions: _____

_____

_____

(please continue on reverse)

GRADUATE_____
CURRENT STUDENT_____
PROSPECTIVE STUDENT_____

EVALUATION - GURU

On a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high) please rate how effective you found each of the major sections of GURU to be in helping you to assess your preferences:

SECTION II: INTEREST INVENTORY

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

SECTION III: SKILLS ASSESSMENT

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

SECTION IV: WORKSTYLE PREFERENCE

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

SECTION V: RANKING YOUR VALUES

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

SECTION VI: RANKING YOUR REWARDS

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

Please give us both a written evaluation of the program and then score it on the scale.

Evaluation:_____

_____

_____

_____

How valuable was the follow-up session? Please score it on the same 1-10 scale.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

Would you recommend this program to a friend? Yes____ No____

Maybe____

FIT CAREER COUNSELING AND PLACEMENT DEPARTMENT (B 216)

INTERVIEW TIPS

RATE YOURSELF ON YOUR AWARENESS OF NON-VERBAL BEHAVIOR

DID YOU:	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
look at the person talking to me?			
focus on the other interviewer's eyes frequently?			
smile at appropriate times?			
nod my head when I agreed with or understood the interviewer?			
avoid playing with clothing, jewelry, tie, etc to control my nervousness?			
remember not to smoke or chew gum?			
maintain good posture rather than slouch in my seat?			

FIT CAREER COUNSELING AND PLACEMENT DEPARTMENT (B 216)

NAME

MAJOR DATE OF GRADUATION

RESUME WORKSHOP (A) DATE:

Have you ever put together your own resume?

yes_____ no_____

If you answered yes, was it:

___ in a college class

___ in a high school class

___ you did it on your own

___ you did it with some help

If you answered no, have you any idea of how to begin?

yes_____ no _____

or what information should be included?

yes_____ no _____

Please check the information you would like to learn by attending this session:

___ the purpose of a resume

___ what details it should contain

___ how to begin to write a resume

___ what a resume should look like

___ tips for evaluating your resume

FIT CAREER COUNSELING AND PLACEMENT DEPARTMENT (B 216)

NAME

MAJOR DATE OF GRADUATION

RESUME WORKSHOP (B) DATE:

Was the length of this workshop:
- too long _____
- too short _____
- about right _____

Was the information presented:
- clear _____
- too complicated _____
- too basic _____

Was this resume session:
- helpful _____
- not helpful _____

Do you feel you now have enough information to write your own resume:
- yes _____
- no _____

Were all of your questions and comments answered?
- yes _____
- no _____
- not clearly _____

Would you recommend this Resume Workshop to other students?
- yes _____
- no _____

Can you list other workshops you would like to attend, relating to your career plans?

Have you any comments or suggestions to help improve the Resume Writing Workshop?

Overall rating of this workshop:
Very Good _____ Good _____ Poor _____

Thank you for taking the time to share your views. It will help us give you and other students better service!

CAREER GRANT

STUDENT EVALUATION SHEET

NAME_____ DATE_____

AGE_____ COLLEGE MAJOR_____

ADDRESS_____ SEMESTER STATUS_____

TELEPHONE #_____ GRADUATION DATE_____

I. PLEASE RESPPOND TO THE FOLLOWING:

A. PARTICIPATION IN CAREER SERVICE ACTIVITIES: YES___ NO___

B. EMPLOYMENT: PART TIME_____ FULL TIME_____

C. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT:_____

D. JOB TITLE OR DESCRIPTION:_____

_____

_____

E. SALARY:_____

F. LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT TO DATE:_____

II. PLEASE RANK THE CAREER SERVICES AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNTIES YOU HAVE RECEIVED:

A. CAREER COUNSELING: EXCELLENT___ VERY GOOD___ GOOD___ POOR___

B. GURU (CAREER GUIDANCE COMPUTER PROGRAM ACTIVITY): EXCELLENT___ VERY GOOD___ GOOD___ POOR___

C. DEVELOPMENT OF INTERVIEW SKILLS: EXCELLENT___ VERY GOOD___ GOOD___ POOR___

D. RESUME AND COVER LETTER INSTRUCTION: EXCELLENT___ VERY GOOD___ GOOD___ POOR___

E. IF YOU PARTICIPATED IN EMPLOYER/STUDENT WORKSHOPS OR RECEIVED INTERVIEW OPPORTUNTIES, PLEASE RESPOND: EXCELLENT___ VERY GOOD___ GOOD___ POOR___

STUDENT EVALUATION SHEET (CONT.)

III. OVERALL EVALUATION OF PROGRAM SERVICES: EXCELLENT____
VERY GOOD____ GOOD____ POOR____

IV. OVERALL EVALUATION OF WORK EXPERIENCE: EXCELLENT____
VERY GOOD____ GOOD____ POOR____

V. IF YOU NEEDED OR HAVE RECEIVED SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS IN THE WORRPLACE, PLEASE DISCUSS IN THE SPACE PROVIDED:

A. ACCOMMODATIONS NEEDED:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. ACCOMMODATIONS RECEIVED:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

IV. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON PROGRAM SERVICES:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

CONFERENCE EVALUATION

Please rate today's conference in terms of information you received from the discussions held.

Overall Evaluation of the Conference

Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

Discussion on Disclosure(revealing disability to employer)

Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

Graduate Students' Discussion and Participation

Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

F.I.T. Faculty's Discussion and Participation

Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

Question and Answer Period

Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

Comments and Suggestions:_____

_____

_____

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_____

CONFERENCE EVALUATION

Please rate today's conference in terms of information you received from the discussions and held.

Overall Evaluation of the Conference

Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

Discussion on the Interview Process

Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

Graduate Students' Discussion and Participation

Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

Employers' Discussion and Participation

Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

Question and Answer Period

Excellent_____ Very Good_____ Good_____ Fair_____

Comments and Suggestions:_____

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APPENDIX J

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CAMPUSES INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING LD PROGRAMS

Recommendations for Developing Comprehensive Program Services for the Learning Disabled

A. Recommendations for Establishing a Learning Disabilities Program

1. Seek outside funds and support from college administrators to create a Learning Disabilities Office at the college. Start with a small number of learning disabled students to demonstrate the effectiveness of a Learning Disabilities Program before requesting a larger program.

2. Hire a Learning Disabilities Coordinator skilled in recognizing learning disabilities in the adult population. Four or five hours a week to start is sufficient. Later, as program enrollment increases and services expand, additional hours can be added to the LD Coordinator's schedule.

3. Make faculty education and industry involvement a priority over tutoring.

B. The Learning Disabilities Coordinator's Role

1. Diagnose students' specific learning disabilities, counsel them about the nature of their learning problems, offer academic counseling, and determine, with student input, the services and accommodations needed to help each LD student succeed at the college level.

2. Hire tutors with the educational background or work experience qualifying them to teach the learning disabled. At least one and a half to two hours a week of one-on-one tutoring in content coursework, study skills, and/or reading and writing skills should be offered to each student. Small group tutorial sessions may also be organized for instruction in these areas.

3. Organize group meetings/rap sessions for LD students when possible.

4. Conduct workshops to educate faculty and staff about LD students' profiles, learning styles, weaknesses, strengths and compensatory abilities, as well as the rights and responsibilities of these students under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

5. Develop evaluative instruments to measure LD students' level of satisfaction with program services, as well as faculty and staff's response to workshop sessions, so that the assessment of program services and activities is ongoing.

6. Build a working relationship with instructors, administrators, and Counseling Center staff, Admissions Office, Registrar's Office, Remedial Department, Reading and Writing Skills Center, Speech Lab, Computer Center, dormitory, bookstore, and

other student service-related offices, so that services are efficiently administered to LD students.

7. Attend professional conferences and conduct needs assessment surveys to become more knowledgeable about LD students; academic and career needs and about implementing effective program services, activities and accommodations that will empower them.

8. Since LD students have difficulty finding jobs and remaining employed, the LD Coordinator should form a partnership (a career staff) with the career and internship counselors. Working together to develop strategies to help LD students develop and achieve career goals well suited to their abilities and areas of interest is crucial to students' career success.

C. The Career Counseling Staff's Role

1. Investigate individual LD students' learning problems, strengths and learning styles, to focus career counseling on matching careers to students' talents, interests, and skill levels.

2. Recruit employers as mentors for LD students to help the career staff develop the students' job skills. Commitment to interviewing LD students, offering internships, and hiring them for part-time and full-time jobs should be sought.

3. Include LD students and employers in organizing industry workshops around student career needs, such as job search skills, job retention skills, business communication skills, disclosure, job accommodations, and interview skills.

4. Continually disseminate information about the program. Create handouts and informational booklets to publicize the services for LD students.

5. Keep key college and faculty/staff and industry representatives well informed about the career services, activities, and successes or problems associated with the employment of the learning disabled.

6. Educate LD students about their rights and responsibilities under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and ADA, and about other issues related to the employment of the learning disabled.

7. Continually develop professional staff. Attend professional conferences and form linkages with organizations that offer support to the learning disabled.

8. Seek support from the college and industry to institutionalize the services most beneficial to the learning disabled obtaining jobs and other work-related experiences.

9. Use evaluative instruments to assess and document the effectiveness of the services and activities developed.

Improvements in the program structure and services should be made as needed.

10. Disseminate information about the learning disabled, their needs and their rights to employers.